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Interview With Charles Z. Wick,
Director, International Communication Agency

"We Must Rekindle Support for the U.S. And the West"

The U.S. has failed for too long to react to a Soviet propaganda offensive, says the government's new information chief. Remedy: Launch an aggressive drive to tell America's story to friends and foes worldwide.

Q Mr. Wick, has the U.S. been losing the propaganda war with Russia by default?

A I wouldn't say that we have been losing by default, because the Voice of America generally has done a very good job and has a high degree of credibility around the world. But we feel that the Voice has not been responding recently to the new challenges that have developed with alarming velocity.

If you look at the press, you find challenges that were practically unheard of a year ago: The concerns of a successor generation in Europe, the geometric rise of pacifist organizations, the growth of the antinuclear movement. We did not perceive acutely enough the great success of Soviet "disinformation"—as well as the Soviet offensive in the overall propaganda war—and therefore the response was not adequate.

Q How do you propose to meet this Soviet challenge using your new policy Project Truth?

A One immediate goal is to halt the erosion of public support for goals of the Atlantic Alliance, especially in Europe. A rise in neutralism and pacifist feeling is rooted in fear that the Continent will become the site of nuclear war between the superpowers. The Soviets are helping this along by characterizing the U.S. as warmongers and themselves as peace lovers. Yet, at the same time, Russian weaponry has grown at an alarming rate.

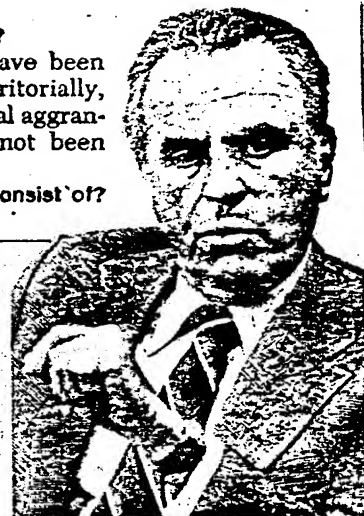
We must rekindle support for the United States and the Western Alliance after World War II. We must tell our allies and enemies that we are a part of the drive to end the result of Soviet domination about the world.

Q Has the U.S. sent a message to the rest of the world?

A Yes. While the Soviets have been aggrandizing themselves territorially, we have renounced any colonial aggrandizement. Yet that fact has not been made clear, at least until now.

Q What does Project Truth consist of?

Wick, 64, is a lawyer and business executive who has been active in movies, television, popular music, health care and real estate. One of the top fund-raisers in Ronald Reagan's 1980 campaign, he is among the President's closest friends.



WARREN LEFFLER—USINW

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